



The Worshipping Assembly at Mass

We come to Mass as the Body of the Risen Christ called together by God for worship. We are incorporated into the Body of Christ through Baptism and so our worship is an act of the whole assembly in union with Jesus by which God makes the world holy and the human race adores the Father through Jesus in the Holy Spirit. God acts in and through the Church as the Body of the Risen Christ. As we make the actions and prayers of the liturgy our own, we enter more fully into our personal communion with Jesus' redeeming act and perfect worship.

Through Baptism we become *"a holy people, a chosen race, a royal priesthood"* (1 Peter 2:9). During Mass we give thanks to God and offer the Victim not only through the hands of the priest but also together with him and learn to offer ourselves. We should endeavor to make this clear by our deep sense of reverence for God and charity toward our brothers and sisters who share with us in the celebration.

The entire congregation of the baptized joins itself to Jesus both in acknowledging the great things that God has done and in the offering of sacrifice. The ordained priest links the Eucharistic consecration to the sacrifice of the Cross and to the Last Supper, making it possible that Jesus' sacrifice becomes the sacrifice of all the members of the Church. Our unity is expressed by hearing the Word of God, joining in prayers and song, offering the sacrifice together, and sharing together at the Lord's Table. Moments of silence at various points during Mass are an invitation for deeper communion with God.

What does your membership in the Body of Christ mean to you as you come to Mass? How does it affect your prayer? How might your prayer change and deepen?